Doubling of rail track in Jammu and Kashmir

113. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the length of the single railway track in the Jammu and Kashmir region;

(b) whether there is any possibility of converting it into a double track; and

(c) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The length of single line railway track in Jammu & Kashmir as on 31.03 .2007 is 137.77 kilometres.

(b) and (c) The doubling of Jalandhar - Jammu Tawi line, part of which falls in Jammu & Kashmir, is already in progress and complete double line on this route will be available by 2008-09.

Jampacked running of local trains in Mumbai

114. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that local trains in Mumbai have been running jampacked for last several years so much that commuters find it difficult to move in a compartment or get down over a station particularly physically challenged and commuters who are casual visitors to Mumbai;

(b) whether it is also a fact that often there are long queues over ticket counters as a result of which commuters often miss their scheduled trains; and

(c) what are the improvements Government have carried out all these years to address the woes of the commuters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. During the peak hours in morning and evening, there is heavy rush. However, special coaches have been earmarked in these trains for the convenience of handicapped persons and lady passengers.

(b) and (c) Booking counters are also crowded during peak rush hours. To address this problem, a number of steps have been taken/ are being taken by Railways, which include provision of additional booking counters, provision of Coupon Validating Machines, provision of computerised Unreserved Ticketing System. Instructions have also been issued to extend Jansadharan Ticket Booking Sevak (JTBS) scheme to Western Railway. Provision of Contactless Smart Card based ticketing system and Automatic Ticket Vending Machines (ATVMs) is also on hand. Improvement in ticketing system is a continuous and ongoing process.

Utilization of railway land

115. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 40,000 hectares of land including 5 cinema halls are lying with Railway's unutilized and idle;